

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8 are now pending in the application. Claims 1 and 6 are amended. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 4, and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on Mitsumori et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,230,722). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a continuous-treatment apparatus including a cleaning treatment unit having a nozzle that blows cleaning solution onto a surface targeted for treatments at an angle less than 45 degrees. The cleaning treatment unit including a first top end surface and a second top end surface each disposed with a predetermined gap from the surface targeted for treatment. The first top end surface is connected to a side of the nozzle opposite an inclined end surface of the nozzle. The second top end surface is connected to an opposite surface from the inclined end surface of the nozzle. The opposite surface is perpendicular to the surface targeted for treatments and is connected to an inclined surface of the second top end surface near the surface targeted for treatments. The inclined surface of the second top end surface is inclined toward the nozzle. The cleaning treatment unit has a recovery path formed by the opposite surface and the inclined end surface of the nozzle, wherein the recovery path is evacuated to a pressure that is less than atmospheric pressure.

Mitsumori et al. fails to teach or suggest the continuous-treatment apparatus and cleaning treatment unit recited by Claim 1. For Example, Mitsumori et al. is silent as to

the first and second top end surfaces, the first top end surface being connected to a side of a nozzle opposite an inclined end surface of the nozzle and the second top end surface being connected to an opposite surface from the inclined end surface of the nozzle and having an inclined surface that is inclined toward the nozzle, as recited by Claim 1. Mitsumori et al. is also silent as to a recovery path formed by the opposite surface and inclined end surface of the nozzle, as recited by Claim 1. Although the Examiner argues that in Mitsumori et al., the discharge path wall (12) can be varied to 90 degrees (See Office Action, 10/1/2007, p. 3), such a configuration of Mitsumori et al., would not include a second top end surface having an inclined surface that is inclined toward the nozzle.

Similar limitations are recited by Claim 6. For at least these reasons, Mitsumori et al. fails to teach or suggest the apparatus and method recited by Claims 1 and 6, respectively. Claim 4 depends from Claim 1, and likewise defines over Mitsumori et al.. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mitsumori (U.S. Pat. No. 6,230,722) and further in view of Goodwin (U.S. Pat. No. 5,324,155). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2 depends from Claim 1, which defines over the prior art as discussed in above. Thus, Claim 2 likewise defines over the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4, 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Nakamura (U.S. Pat. No. 6,921,148) in view of Mitsumori et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,230,722). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

With respect to Claims 1 and 6, the Examiner admits that Nakamura is silent regarding the particular details of the cleaning treatment unit as presently claimed. See Office Action, 10/1/2007, p. 6. Mitsumori et al. likewise fails to teach or suggest these limitations, as discussed in detail above. For at least the above reasons, Nakamura and Mitsumori et al. fail to teach or suggest the apparatus and method recited by Claims 1 and 6 respectively. Applicants note that Claims 4 and 8 depend from Claim 1 and Claim 6, respectively, and likewise define over the cited references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Nakamura (U.S. Pat. No. 6,921,148) and Mitsumori (U.S. Pat. No. 6,230,722) and further in view of Goodwin (U.S. Pat. No. 5,324,155). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2 depends from Claim 1, which defines over the prior art as discussed in above. Thus, Claim 2 likewise defines over the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Cady (U.S. Pat. No. 4,544,446) in view of Mitsumori (U.S. Pat. No. 6,230,722). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

With respect to Claims 1 and 6, the Examiner admits that Cady is silent regarding the particular details of the cleaning treatment unit as presently claimed. See Office Action, 10/1/2007, p. 12. Mitsumori et al. likewise fails to teach or suggest these

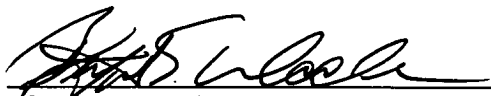
limitations, as discussed in detail above. For at least the above reasons, Cady and Mitsumori et al. fail to teach or suggest the apparatus and method recited by Claims 1 and 6 respectively. Applicants note that Claims 2, 4, and 8 depend from either Claim 1 or Claim 6 and likewise define over the cited references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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